

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



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## STATE OF MONTANA

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**TO:** Montana Birthing Hospitals

**FROM:** Lori Hutchinson, Vaccine Coordinator  
Montana Immunization Program

**DATE:** August 5, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Enrolling in the Vaccines for Children Program

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program is a federally funded entitlement program that provides vaccines at no cost to children who might not be vaccinated because of inability to pay. It is one of several funding sources the Montana Immunization Program uses to purchase newborn hepatitis B vaccine supplied to birthing hospitals.

During a recent review, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concluded that the Montana hepatitis B birth dose program does not comply with VFC requirements in two regards: 1) VFC vaccine is transferred to providers not enrolled in the VFC Program (birthing hospitals) and 2) hospitals are not tracking VFC-eligible birth dose recipients. The CDC determined that we must enroll birthing hospitals as VFC providers by August 31, 2011 or stop providing VFC-funded hepatitis B vaccine to non-enrolled hospitals.

**The Montana Immunization Program is requesting that Montana birthing hospitals enroll as VFC providers. This will bring our program in compliance with VFC requirements and allow us to continue to supply hepatitis B birth dose to hospitals.**

To facilitate the enrollment process, either your local health department or the Montana Immunization Program is available to help. Our goal is to avoid disruption of the birth dose supply, preserve established relationships where possible, and streamline the VFC requirements for birthing hospitals. All infants can still receive the State-supplied hepatitis B birth dose. However, because this program is funded in part with VFC money, we need to account for VFC-eligible birth dose recipients.

### **VFC enrollment involves:**

- Submitting a Provider Agreement and Provider Profile to the Montanan Immunization Program
- Developing a process for logging temperatures in VFC vaccine storage units twice daily
- Tracking VFC-eligible birth dose recipients by using an approved tracking method. The easiest method would be a computer-generated report from your electronic health record or billing system. Reports must be approved by the Immunization Program (more information to be provided.)
- Developing or reviewing (if already in place) a process for ordering and accounting for birth dose vaccine (see below).

Once enrolled, you may continue to order and track hepatitis B birth dose vaccine through your local health department if you have an existing relationship and it is agreeable to both parties. However, you must report all administered hepatitis B birth doses to your local health department so they can include this information on their monthly vaccine report. If you choose not to order and report through your local health department, then you will be required to do so directly with the Montana Immunization Program. You may also choose to collaborate with a clinic within your organization that is already enrolled as a VFC provider.

We apologize for the short timeline on this request. Your local health department or the Montana Immunization Program will be contacting you with more information and necessary forms. If you have questions, please contact the Montana Immunization Program at 444-5580 [hhsiz@mt.gov](mailto:hhsiz@mt.gov).